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"Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.
The Rock, like something starting from a sleep,
Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed again;
That ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag
Was ready with her cavern; Hammar-scar,
And the tall Steep of Silver-how, sent forth
A noise of laughter; southern Loughrigg heard,
And Fairfield answered with a mountain tone;
Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
Carried the Lady's voice,—old Skiddaw blew
His speaking-trumpet;—back out of the clouds
Of Glaramara southward came the voice;
And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head."

Wordsworth.

"The valley rings with mirth and joy;
And, pleased to welcome in the May,
From hill to hill the echoes fling
Their liveliest roundelay."—*Wordsworth.*

"Yes, it was the mountain Echo,
Solitary, clear, profound,
Answering to the shouting cuckoo,
Giving her sound for sound!

Unsolicited reply
To a babbling wanderer sent;
Like her ordinary cry,
Like—but oh, how different!

Hears not also mortal Life?
Hear not we, unthinking Creatures!
Slaves of folly, love, or strife—
Voices of two different natures?

Have not *we* too?—yes, we have
Answers, and we know not whence;
Echoes from beyond the grave,
Recognised intelligence!

Such rebounds our inward ear
Catches sometimes from afar—
Listen, ponder, hold them dear;
For of God,—of God they are."—*Wordsworth.*

"Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that livest unseen
Within thy aery shell,
By slow Meander's margin green,
And in the violet embroidered vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well:
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That liketh thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere!
So mayest thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heaven's harmonies."

Milton.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

- All communications must be authenticated by the proper name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication. We would request those who send us country newspapers, wishing us to read particular paragraphs, to mark the passage, by cutting a slit in the paper near it. We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.*
- A Subscriber.—*The violin by Francisco Juliano, about which you enquire, is still for sale, with others by Stradivarius, Jacoba Stainer, George Amon, and Jannacius Gaglianus, and may be seen at 69, Dean Street. We know no more of the pedigree than is stated in the original advertisement.*
- E. P.—*We believe it would have puzzled Beethoven himself to find out from which of his works the tune you mention is taken. The fact is that hymn tunes are often so perverted from the original melody, that they can scarcely be recognized in their disguise.*

Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

BISHOP STORTFORD.—Mr. W. A. Boast gave an evening concert at the Assembly Rooms, on Friday, the 5th Dec., assisted by the following artists:—Miss Messent, Miss A. Manning, Miss Huddart, Mrs. Boast, Mr. Frank Bodda, and Herr Carl Deichmann, the celebrated violinist. The performance gave the highest satisfaction to a crowded audience.

DALSTON AMATEUR CHORAL UNION.—The members of this Society gave their sixth dress concert, to their friends, on Tuesday, the 9th December, at the Manor Rooms, Hackney, under the direction of Mr. William Cockell. The programme gave entire satisfaction to an audience numbering upwards of 650 persons.

TESTIMONIAL TO MRS. HOWELL.—No better evidence could possibly be afforded of the appreciation of Mrs. Howell's invaluable services to the Caermarthen Musical Society, for her gratuitous assistance at various local concerts, and her powerful influence in improving the musical taste of the town, than the spontaneous manner in which the public have contributed to the testimonial which was presented to her on the 17th of Dec., at the Public Rooms in Caermarthen. The testimonial consisted of a purse of 50 sovereigns. Mrs. Howell, in receiving the purse, appropriately acknowledged the kindness of her friends.

SKIPTON.—A concert was given here on Friday, the 5th December, by Mr. Watson, organist, at which the principal vocalists were Miss Crossland, Miss Charlesworth, Mr. Hargrave, and Mr. Mason. Mr. Watson presided at the pianoforte. The programme comprised some of the "gems" of secular music, and was very well performed.

BIRMINGHAM.—The Birmingham Festival Choral Society performed the *Messiah* on the 26th inst., at the Town Hall. The principal vocalists were Miss Messent, Madame Bassano, Mr. Wilbye Cooper, and Mr. H. Barnby. The band and chorus consisted of 250 performers. Mr. H. Hayward was leader; Mr. Stimpson, organist; and Mr. Stockley, conductor. The oratorio was performed in a most praiseworthy style.

BATH.—Mr. Costa's *Eli* was produced at the Assembly Rooms during the early part of December, with a band of fifty performers, and a chorus numbering eighty voices. This was a spirited undertaking of the lessee of the rooms, and it was rewarded by a large attendance. The only drawback was the absence of Mr. Sims Reeves, who had been engaged to sing the principal tenor part. Madame Rudersdorff and Miss Dolby were warmly applauded. The band was excellent; Mr. Philip J. Smith, of Bristol, was the conductor, and Mr. Salmon the principal violin. The choral singers deserved the highest praise.

PSALMODY REFORM.—**GREENOCK.**—On the 3rd of December, Mr. Hatley's course of lessons on Psalmody was brought to a close in the New Town Hall. Several elaborate pieces of music, including chorales and anthems, were sung with remarkable precision and power. Such a meeting may well encourage Mr. Hatley to proceed with his important labours in Psalmody reform.

MARYPORT.—A Charity Concert and Ball for the relief of the town was held on the 20th of November. The amateur singers, including Messrs. Hine, Minshaw, Gorley, Barnes, and Banks, who had been carefully exercised under the musical training of Messrs J. and W. B. Graham, acquitted themselves with great credit. The Messrs. Graham performed several duets upon the piano and flute, which were very much applauded; and by their kind and gratuitous assistance, they rendered essential service to the cause of charity.

WESTMINSTER AND PIMLICO AMATEUR CHORAL SOCIETY.—This Society gave their third performance of sacred and secular music in St. Mary's Schoolroom, Westminster, on the 11th of December. The programme included some excellent compositions, which were very ably performed. The Society is much indebted for its success to the exertions of the hon. secretary, Mr. Bower Marsh, and the conductor, Mr. Hallett Sheppard.

ROYAL BRITISH INSTITUTION.—A performance of *Judas Maccabæus* took place at the above Institution, in Cowper Street, City Road, on the 8th December. The principal performers were Miss Fordham, Miss Boden, Messrs. G. Tedder, Farmer, Boden, and F. Moir. Conductor, Mr. A. J. Hubbard, and principal violin, Mr. Meriton. The band and chorus numbered 100 performers, and the oratorio was most efficiently performed.

YORK.—The Choral Society gave their first Concert of the Season in the Festival Concert Room, on the 19th of December, to a large audience. The first part consisted of the whole of Mozart's celebrated Twelfth Mass; the second of a miscellaneous selection of Songs, Glees, &c. The following vocalists were engaged as principals:—Miss Whitham, Miss Newbound, Mr. Wilton, and Mr. Lambert. Mr. C. N. Allen was the leader.

SELBY.—A Miscellaneous Concert was given in the public rooms here, on Wednesday evening, November 27th, when the following vocalists were engaged:—Miss Newell, Miss Bedford, Master Webster, Messrs. Bell and Marshall. Mr. J. D. Kay presided at the pianoforte. The audience was not so numerous as on previous occasions, though the performance was very superior.

WYRMOUTH.—The New Organ, built by Gray and Davison, for St. John's Church, Radipole, was opened on Thursday, the 5th, by Mr. R. Linter, who played a choice selection of music by Mozart, &c., and thereby displayed the capabilities of the organ, and also his own skill, to great advantage. The organ, itself, is a most beautiful instrument, and is, beyond doubt, by far the best in the neighbourhood. Two services were held on the occasion, when the sum of £40 was collected.

BURTON-ON-TRENT.—On Thursday, the 4th inst., the members of the Burton-on-Trent Music Society gave their second rehearsal in the Town Hall, under their able conductor, Mr. Day. As the Society gets older, we have no doubt it will go on improving, and one day take up a prominent position in the musical world.

PRESCOT HARMONIC SOCIETY.—This Society gave a Miscellaneous Concert on the 10th of December, in the Town Hall, Prescott; the vocal class, we are glad to see, now exceeds 150 pupils.

HEREFORD.—The lay-clerks of the Cathedral, Messrs. Burvill, Barnby, Herbert, and Carpenter, have advertised three Subscription Concerts for the ensuing winter. Their programmes are of a very attractive description.

CHEDDAR, SOMERSET.—The Cheddar Singing Class gave their first Concert on Friday Evening, December 16th, in the National School Room, before a very numerous and respectable audience. The different pieces were well performed, and received universal applause. The principal vocalists were Miss R. Tripp, Miss M. A. White, Mr. John Selby, Mr. C. Hill, Mr. W. Brooks, and Mr. W. Pavey. Mr. D. Jefferies, Master of the National School, conducted.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.—The first of the usual Christmas performances of the *Messiah* came off on Friday, the 12th of December. The singers were Mrs. Clare Hepworth, Miss Louisa Vinning, Miss Dolby, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Herr Formes. On this occasion Mrs. Clare Hepworth, who, it may be remembered, appeared at the last Gloucester Festival, made her first appearance in the presence of a London audience. Unfortunately, this lady, either through excessive fright or indisposition, was unable to sing the music allotted to her, and Miss Louisa Vinning took up the soprano part without previous notice, and acquitted herself to the entire satisfaction of the audience. The second performance of the *Messiah* took place on the 19th, when Madame Clara Novello made her first appearance this season. In no instance has she exhibited more fully the exquisite brilliancy of her voice, or the extraordinary beauty of her most artistic style of singing. Her presence in England at this period is quite indispensable to the perfect performance of an oratorio. On this occasion Mr. Thomas sang the bass part, in the absence of Herr Formes, and acquitted himself most creditably.

CLAY CROSS.—The Philharmonic Society (lately established) gave their first public concert on the 15th of December. The evening's entertainments consisted of glees, songs, &c., interspersed with a selection of instrumental pieces. The vocalists were Mr. W. A. Snaith, Mr. L. Roberts, and Mr. W. Engor: the instrumentalists—Mr. Joseph Holmes, violin; Mr. Sears, cornet; Mr. Ratcliffe, violoncello; and Mr. W. A. Snaith, pianoforte.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE HANDEL FESTIVAL.—The committee of the Sacred Harmonic Society, appointed to carry out the arrangements for the great Handel Festival this year, at the Crystal Palace, have already received offers of assistance from more singers than would be sufficient to twice fill the orchestra, and a series of Metropolitan choral rehearsals will shortly be arranged. All the large provincial towns have come forward in a very unanimous manner with offers of their well-trained and efficient choirs. The interest in the undertaking appears to increase very rapidly, and it is probable that we shall hear of Handel Festivals throughout the whole country. The note of preparation having once been sounded, the magnificent choirs of Birmingham, Hereford, York, Worcester, Gloucester, Norwich, and many other places, who cannot possibly find room in the Crystal Palace, will be anxious to sustain their reputation by a marked superiority in commemorating the centenary of Handel's death. The contract for the organ has been taken by Messrs. Gray and Davison. It will be on a really grand scale, with an ample supply of the largest pipes that can be constructed, and will occupy a space 50 feet wide by 25 feet in depth, besides the platforms required for the bellows and the 16 wind reservoirs. A circumstance of great interest in connection with the Festival has recently occurred. This is no less than the discovery of the full scores from which Handel himself conducted his performances. It is well known that the autographs of Handel's compositions are preserved in her Majesty's library at Buckingham Palace, and the kindness shown to render them useful on any occasion of public interest deserves the warmest acknowledgements. As a collection of the labors of a great composer, they are probably without parallel, comprising as they do, eighty-six volumes of oratorios, operas, and other works, entirely in the composer's handwriting. Handel left these valuable records by will to John Christopher Smith, his friend and amanuensis, by whom they were presented to George the Third, as a mark of gratitude for the patronage conferred by that monarch on the oratorio performances which Smith carried on for twelve years after Handel's death. The scores which have just been discovered are the fair transcripts made from the original manuscripts, and having evidently been those used in the orchestra, they are especially valuable and interesting from containing as they do the most important alterations and variations, both from Handel's autograph scores, as well as from the printed copies. They bear clear internal evidence of having been used for orchestral purposes by Handel himself, since, apart from curtailments of various movements, such as a composer would only indicate, they contain many additions and re-adaptations, as well as occasionally the names of the principal singers, in the handwriting of Handel himself. The possession of these interesting relics can also be clearly traced from John Christopher Smith to their present owner, Mr. Victor Schälcher, a gentleman who has for the past two years been unremittingly engaged in collecting materials for, and writing a life of Handel. Mr. Schälcher has in the kindest manner placed at the disposal of the committee of the Sacred Harmonic Society such of these manuscripts as may be useful for the society's performances, or for the coming celebration, and they are now under careful revision prior to the preparation of the large mass of orchestral parts which will be required at the 1857 Festival. It scarcely needs pointing out that the discovery of these volumes (which have been shut up from the musical world for nearly a century) at the present period, is most opportune, and will of itself impart considerable additional interest to the great musical celebration of May next.

ST. MARTIN'S HALL.—The *Messiah* was performed on Wednesday, the 17th, under the direction of Mr. Hullah. The principal vocal performers were Miss Banks, Mrs. Gilbert, Miss Dolby, Mr. S. Reeves, and Mr. Thomas. The new organ by Willis, built for the Wells Cathedral, was used by Mr. Hopkins. The chorus, as usual, consisted of Mr. Hullah's upper singing class; and the performance was altogether most creditable. Mrs. Gilbert, who made her first appearance in oratorios, and shared the soprano music with Miss Banks, acquitted herself extremely well, obtaining great applause in "Then shall the eyes of the blind," and in "He shall feed his flock."

BISHOP MONUMENT.—At a meeting of the committee appointed to erect a suitable memorial over the grave of that sterling English composer, Sir Henry Bishop, held at the Rooms of the Sacred Harmonic Society, at Exeter Hall, it was stated that the subscriptions (mostly comprising sums of five shillings each person) amounted to £176 3s. 6d., from 359 contributors.

AMATEUR CONCERT.—**ST. PANCRAS.**—An amateur concert took place at the St. Pancras School Room, Upper Hartland Road, on the 16th of Dec. The programme comprised a variety of songs, glees, and choruses. The concerted pieces were well sung by the Regent's Park Glee Society. Mr. Rost was the conductor.

FARINGDON.—The British School Tea Meeting and Concert took place on the 11th of Dec., in aid of the funds of the British School. The company, numbering about 300, sat down to a comfortable tea, provided by the ladies who take an interest in the school. The town is indebted to the efforts of Mr. G. Fidel for the treat thus afforded. The music, which consisted of anthems and various selections from the oratorios, was well performed. Mr. G. Orchard presided at the harmonium.

SONNING.—A Glee and Madrigal Society, consisting of the Church Choir and others, has been formed in Sonning since the appointment of Mr. Bond as organist to the Parish Church, and they gave their first concert in the Reading Rooms on the 10th of Dec. The programme consisted of sacred and secular music, which went off with great spirit. The proficiency exhibited by the members was evidence of the ability of their master, Mr. Bond.

WHITING STREET SINGING SOCIETY, BURY-ST.-EDMUND'S.—This Society commenced a series of meetings on Friday evening, December 19th, 1856, when Costa's oratorio of *Elia* was given, which was listened to throughout with great pleasure.

MR. JOHN GOSS, Organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, has been appointed Composer to H.M. Chapel Royal, in the place of the late Mr. William Knvyett.

PORTSMOUTH MUSICAL ASSOCIATION.—This Society gave their first concert of the seventh season on the 11th of Dec. The first part was a selection from the *Messiah*, and the second from *St. Paul* and *Judas Maccabæus*. The soprano solos were well sung by Miss E. A. Hughes, and the alto solos by Mr. G. Fuller.

WESTMINSTER AND PIMLICO AMATEUR CHORAL SOCIETY.—This Society gave their third performance of Sacred and Secular Music, on the 11th of December, in one of the school-rooms attached to St. Mary's Church, Vincent Square. It was evident that great care and attention had been bestowed upon the training of the members by the conductor, Mr. J. Hallett Sheppard. Above 400 persons were present.

TOPSHAM.—On the 15th of December, a concert of vocal and instrumental music was given at the Victoria Hall, by Mr. H. G. Halfyard (assistant organist at the Exeter Cathedral). The principal vocalists were Miss Cambridge, Messrs. Browning and Ingham, and Messrs. Ford, Mitchell, and Toyer, members of the Topsham Glee Company.

PUDSEY (Yorkshire).—On the 23rd of December, a concert was given in the Public Hall, Pudsey, by the blind vocalists of the Wilberforce Institution, York; ably assisted by the clever blind pianiste, Mr. W. J. Pritchard, of Leeds.

DERBY CHORAL SOCIETY.—This Society, which has now been established, or rather revived, about twelve months, gave its second concert for this season on the 12th of Dec., in the Lecture Hall, to a very numerous audience. The marked improvement which was discernible in the performance over the former concerts, warrants a hope that the Derby Choral Society may one day become an important provincial association. The orchestra was led by Mr. W. Morley, and ably conducted by Mr. Woodward.

LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—The tenth subscription concert for the year took place on the 23rd of Dec., when the *Messiah* was performed by Madame Clara Novello, Miss Lascelles, Mr. S. Reeves, and Mr. Weiss, and a band and chorus of 250 performers. Mr. G. Hermann was the conductor. Madame Novello was received with unbounded applause. Her fame is as great throughout the provinces as in the metropolis. She has now no rival.

LEICESTER.—The *Messiah* was performed on Monday, December, 22nd, at the New Music Hall, the principal vocalists being Miss Rebecca Isaacs, Miss Reeves, Mr. Elliot Galer, and Mr. Borrani. The chorus was very efficient. Mr. J. A. Smith played the trumpet obligatos, and the performance was conducted by Mr. Alfred Nicholson with care and ability.

HASLINGDEN.—Mr. Meller's second concert took place at the Town Hall, on the 11th of December, and was very fully attended. The programme was well selected, and the several artistes engaged acquitted themselves to the entire satisfaction of a numerous audience.

WALTON-UNDER-EDGE.—On the 8th of December, the Harmonic Institution gave their first concert this season, to a crowded audience. The institution was founded two years ago, and the band and chorus at present number 60 members. Most of the music was executed with great precision, and reflected credit on the leader, Mr. S. Partridge, and the conductor, Mr. R. Lacey.

LIVERPOOL.—Miss Lacy Gaskill's first concert of vocal and instrumental music took place on the 20th of Dec. before a crowded audience,—the vocalists being Miss Lacy Gaskill, Mr. Millar, Miss Wiatt, and Mr. Armstrong: instrumentalists, Mr. Bactens, violin; Master Radcliffe, flute; Mr. Joseph Skeaf, junior, conductor.

HUNTINGDON.—On Wednesday, the 17th of December, a performance was given by Dr. Steggall, on the All Saints' organ, lately erected by Messrs. Byceson and Son, of London. A great portion of the church was filled with the neighbouring gentry and inhabitants of the town, who were highly gratified at having this excellent opportunity of judging of the merits of their new organ.

SUNDERLAND.—A concert was given in the Town Hall, on the 12th of December, in aid of the building fund of Hartlepool Mechanics' Institute; on which occasion Mrs. Sunderland, Mr. Phillips, Miss Taylor, Mr. Parker, of Leeds, Mr. Wilmot, and Mr. Hewitt, took part. Mr. Parker, organist of Stranton Church, presided at the pianoforte.

OBITUARY.—Died, on the 5th of December, Mr. George Holden, of Liverpool, Conductor of the Liverpool Festival Choral Society, and (for 34 years) of the Apollo Glee Club. His funeral was attended by upwards of 300 members of the Festival, Choral, and Philharmonic Societies, who have all been associated with him for a number of years. He was the composer of several prize glees, and editor of a volume of sacred music (published by Novello). He was, also, Chorus Master for the Liverpool Festivals, Dublin, &c., and enjoyed the friendship of most of our leading musicians. He was in his 51st year.

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